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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 12, 2008

VIRGINIA HEALTH EXCHANGE NETWORK ANNOUNCES MULTI-PAYER PORTAL SOLICITATION

~Effort designed to lower administrative costs in healthcare~

RICHMOND — As part of National Health IT Week, the Virginia Health Exchange Network (VHEN) today announced the release of a Request for Information (“RFI”) calling for proposals to create and maintain a technology solution to simplify patient insurance eligibility verification. VHEN is a collaboration of Virginia health plans and health systems dedicated to lowering administrative costs in healthcare convened by the Virginia Association of Health Plans (VAHP), The Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association (VHHA), and the Governor’s Office of Health IT.

“We are humbled by the extraordinary cooperation between Virginia’s payer and provider communities including government, non-profit, and for-profit organizations to lower administrative healthcare costs,” said Virginia Technology Secretary and National Health IT Week Honorary Co-Chairman, Aneesh Chopra. “This effort should attract the nation’s most innovative firms seeking to build a model that can scale nationwide.”

"Our participating health plans have worked hard to ensure that we're using technology to embrace efficiencies and cost-savings wherever possible," said Burke King, VAHP Executive Committee member and President, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Virginia. "This initiative offers us a new way to leverage our previous investments to create a superior service from which we will all benefit."

“Virginia’s hospitals and health systems are committed to advancing efficiency wherever possible, including in administrative transactions whose costs are far too high for both payers and providers,” said Chris Bailey, VHHA Senior Vice President. “And we fully support the collaborative, public-private structure of VHEN to identify and implement solutions that benefit all participants.”

VHEN is committed to leveraging the work done by CAQH’s CORE initiative (<http://www.caqh.org/benefits.php>) to build on existing electronic transactions as providers and health plans move to a paperless administrative environment in the coming years. The RFI is available at www.healthitcouncil.vi.virginia.gov. Responses are due by August 15th, 2008.

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